:SHISHIDO SHIHO / SHIROU:

MASUDA: THE HEROINE WHO "IS ACTUALLY NOT THE GENDER THEY LOOK". I DECIDED FROM THE START THAT SHIHO WOULD BE AN EROTIC CHARACTER, BUT AT THE TIME I WAS RELUCTANT TO DRAW EROTIC THINGS, SO I WAS VERY UNEASY. THEN I THOUGHT I MIGHT AS WELL LET GO OF THE METER AND MAKE HER NOT JUST "SEXY" BUT A FULL BLOWN "PERVERT", WHICH FREED ME IN A WAY I CAN'T QUITE EXPLAIN. AND IT ACTUALLY CURED ME OF MY RELUCTANCE (LAUGH). BECAUSE OF THAT, POOR SHIROU CONSTANTLY GETS THE SHORT END OF THE STICK...

:KOUMOTO AKANE:

MASUDA: THE HEROINE WHO "IS ACTUALLY OLDER THAN SHE LOOKS". SHE'S INCIDENTALLY THE FIRST MAIN CHARACTER THAT I DESIGNED. SO WHEN SHE WAS INTRODUCED, I WAS EXCITED TO FINALLY BE ABLE TO DRAW HER. TO BE SURE THAT THE STRANGENESS OF HER HORNS STOOD OUT, I TOOK GREAT CARE IN DRAWING HER AS CUTE AS POSSIBLE.

:KOUMOTO AKARI:

MASUDA: INITIALLY, SHE WAS REALLY SUPPOSED TO BE JUST THE HOMEROOM TEACHER, A MINOR CHARACTER. BUT AS SHE INTERACTED WITH THE PRINCIPAL, SHE ENDED UP DEVELOPPING IN HER OWN WAY. I WAS FAR FROM IMAGINING I WOULD EVENTUALLY MAKE HER WORK IN A MAID CAFÉ.

:KIRYUUIN RIN:

MASUDA: THE HEROINE WHO "IS ACTUALLY NOT FROM OUR TIME". YOU COULD SAY HER DESIGN IS SORT OF A SCRAPPED DESIGN FOR SHIHO BUT... SHE DOESN'T REALLY LOOK IT, DOES SHE. (LAUGH) SINCE SHE'S CARRYING A SWORD, I THOUGHT ABOUT MAKING HER A DANGEROUS GIRL CONSTANTLY SWINGING IT AROUND, BUT I ENDED UP PUTTING THE GRANDDAUGHTER ASPECT FIRST, AND THAT'S HOW SHE CAME TO BE AS SHE IS.

:SHIROGANE KAREN:

MASUDA: SHE WAS CONCEIVED AS AN OPPOSITE FORCE TO AKANE AND A STUDENT COUNCIL PRESIDENT. THE OPPOSITE OF A DEMON WOULD BE AN ANGEL, SO I DIDN'T LOOK VERY FAR (LAUGH). I HAD INITIALLY THOUGHT ABOUT CREATING OTHER COUNCIL MEMBERS, AND MOMOCHI, INTRODUCED IN VOLUME 12, WAS SUPPOSED TO BE ONE OF THEM, BUT SHIROGANE-SAN COMES OUT AS MORE DISTINCT WHEN SHE'S PITIFUL, SO SHE ENDED UP AS THE ONLY COUNCIL MEMBER...

WHAT IS THE HARSHEST PART OF DRAWING FOR A WEEKLY MAGAZINE?

MASUDA: YOU HAVE VERY LITTLE TIME TO TAKE CLEAR CUT DECISIONS. I ALWAYS WORRY SO MUCH ABOUT WHETHER I MADE THE BEST CHOICE OR NOT THAT MY STOMACH HURTS (LAUGH).

WHAT IS YOUR USUAL PROCESS FOR THINKING UP A STORYBOARD? FOR EXAMPLE, ARE THERE ANY PLACES WHERE IDEAS COME TO YOU MORE EASILY?

MASUDA: I OFTEN TAKE LONG WALKS, OR HOLE UP IN FAMILY RESTAURANTS. AND I OFTEN TAKE ADVICE FROM MY EDITOR, MY FRIENDS OR MY STAFF.

CURRENTLY, HOW MANY PEOPLE WORK WITH YOU, ASSISTANTS OR OTHER? AND HOW ARE THE TASKS DIVIDED?

MASUDA: 8 PEOPLE. THERE'S AN ASSISTANT FOR BACKGROUNDS, ONE FOR HAIR REFLECTIONS AND SMALL DETAILS ON THE CHARACTERS, ONE FOR THE SCREENTONES, ETC., BUT BASICALLY THEY ADAPT TO THE NEEDS OF THE MOMENT.

WHEN WRITING AN EPISODE, WHAT ARE YOU CAREFUL OF WHEN YOU MUST DIVIDE UP THE COMICAL AND SERIOUS MOMENTS?

MASUDA: BECAUSE OF MY CHARACTER, I TEND TO SLIP INTO SERIOUS MODE IF I'M NOT CAREFUL, SO I MUST BE WARY TO NOT REDUCE THE GAGS TOO MUCH. BUT I AM OFTEN TOO WARY AND END UP REDUCING THE SERIOUS MOMENTS TOO MUCH. IF THE SCENES NEED TO BE COMICAL, I ADD GAGS, IF THEY NEED TO BE SERIOUS, I ADD SERIOUSNESS. FROM THERE, I WANT TO BE ABLE TO COMPENSATE WHEN I LET MY GUARD DOWN, BUT I'M STILL FUMBLING TO FIND THE RIGHT BALANCE.

EVEN THE HEROINES CAN GET VERY DEFORMED FACES IN SOME PANELS. WHAT POINT ARE YOU CAREFUL ABOUT WHEN DRAWING THOSE?

MASUDA: IF I HAD TO SAY... I TRY TO DO IT THOROUGHLY. NOT A SINGLE TRACE OF CUTENESS MUST REMAIN.

ASAHI AND YOUKO BECOME A COUPLE JUST BEFORE THE MAIN CHARACTERS ENTER THEIR THIRD YEAR. WAS THIS DEVELOPMENT PLANNED FROM THE START?

MASUDA: ABSOLUTELY NOT. I JUST THOUGHT THAT IT WOULD BE A BAD JOKE IF THEY DIDN'T CONFESS AT THAT POINT, SO THEY DID.

WERE THERE OTHER PARTS THAT DID NOT HAPPEN AS PLANNED? IF YES, WHICH ONE, SPECIFICALLY?

MASUDA: THERE ARE ACTUALLY FEW EVENTS THAT DO GO AS PLANNED. MIKAN'S CONFESSION IN THE FUTURE IN VOLUME 5 AND ASAHI DECIDING TO CONFESS AFTER THAT, YOUKO KISSING ASAHI IN VOLUME 8, ALL OF THOSE WERE OUTSIDE MY PREVISIONS.

AMONG ALL THE DEVELOPMENTS SO FAR, IN WHICH EPISODE DID YOU POUR YOUR FEELINGS THE MOST?

MASUDA: AS MENTIONNED IN MY PREVIOUS ANSWER, IT'S MIKAN'S CONFESSION IN VOLUME 5. I THOUGHT SHE REALLY DID HER BEST THERE.

REGARDING THE SCRAPPED IDEAS, WHAT KIND WERE SCRAPPED AT THE STORYBOARD STAGE?

MASUDA: IN CHAPTER 31, "LET'S STAY OVER AT THE SHIRAGAMIS'!", THE CLASS REP AND SHIHO WERE INITIALLY SUPPOSED TO GO SEE HOW ASAHI WAS DOING TOO.

WHEN IMAGINING A CHARACTER, DDES THE VISUAL ASPECT CDME FIRST, DR IS IT THE PERSONALITY? AND WHAT ARE YOU CAREFUL ABDUT WHEN INTRODUCING A NEW CHARACTER?

MASUDA: IN MY CASE, THE VISUAL ASPECT COMES FIRST. AND FROM THERE, I DETERMINE THEIR CHARACTER. THEN I TRY TO MAKE SURE THAT THEIR APPEARANCE OR PERSONALITY AREN'T REDUNDANT WITH ANOTHER CHARACTER'S, AND SEE IF I CAN MAKE THEM GROW INSIDE MY HEAD.

I SUPPOSE YOU ARE ATTACHED TO ALL YOUR CHARACTERS, BUT WHICH DNE DO YOU LIKE IN PARTICULAR? CDULD YOU TELL US WHY?

MASUDA: MIKAN. BECAUSE IN THE EARLY CHAPTERS SHE WAS STUCK WITH A THANKLESS ROLE, AND I REMEMBER REALLY WANTING TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT.

COULD YOU PLEASE MIMICK THE TITLE AND TELL US ONE OF YOUR SECRETS?

MASUDA: THE TRUTH IS... I AM ACROPHOBIC. WHENEVER I AM ABOVE THE THIRD FLOOR, I FEEL LIKE I'M FLOATING IN SPACE, AND I GET SCARED.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR REACTIDN WHEN YOU LEARNED YOUR SERIES WAS GDING TD BE ANIMATED.

MASUDA: I HONESTLY THOUGHT IT WAS A PHONE PRANK.

WHAT DID YOU TALK ABDUT WHEN YOU MET WITH THE ANIME'S PRDDUCERS? AND WHAT DID YOU TELL THEM TD BE CAREFUL ABDUT?

MASUDA: WHEN I IMAGINE A STORY, I TEND TO RELY ON A WRITTEN SCRIPT, AND THUS CAN'T REALLY PICTURE THE MOVEMENTS IN MY MIND, SO I TOLD THEM I WAS REALLY EXCITED TO SEE MY CHARACTERS ANIMATED. AND I PRIMARILY ASKED THEM TO MAKE THE SERIES FUN.

WHEN YOU ACTUALLY DISCOVERED THE END RESULT, WHAT WAS YOUR REACTION?

MASUDA: I WAS HAPPY, EMBARASSED, BUT ALSO EXCITED. I WAS JUST MOVED THAT THEY PUT SO MUCH CHARM INTO IT.

AND ON WHICH ASPECT IN PARTICULAR, DID YOU FEEL THAT CHARM?

MASUDA: I GUESS, IN THE MOVEMENTS AND VOICES THAT THE MANGA DOESN'T HAVE. THE CUTESY VOICES AND MIMICKINGS REALLY GOT TO ME!

WHAT DID YOU THINK DF MR. MARUFUJI HIRDTAKA'S CHARACTER DESIGNS?

MASUDA: AT FIRST I FOUND THAT THEY LOOKED A BIT "ADULT", BUT WHEN I ACTUALLY SAW THEM MOVE I WAS LIKE "OH, I SEE!" I THANK HIM FOR DRAWING THE CHARACTERS BEAUTIFUL AND ADORABLE, BUT ALSO SILLY AT TIMES!

TO CONCLUDE, A MESSAGE FOR YOUR READERS.

MASUDA: THANK YOU, THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR READING AND ENJOYING "JITSU WA WATASHI WA". I THINK I STILL HAVE MANY FLAWS, BUT I BEG OF YOU, PLEASE WATCH OVER THESE LITTLE IDIOTS WITH WARM AND LOVING EYES!

A SPECIAL OMAKE BY MASUDA KOJI-SENSEI!!
SPECIAL CHAPTER
SHIRAGAMI-SAN'S DAILY LIFE!
PRINCIPAL
OKAY, LET'S START THE PEEPING CORNER!!
YOURS TRULY, SHIRAGAMI TOUKO, WILL BE THE PLAY-BY-PLAY COMMENTATOR! KOUMOTO AKANE WILL BE OUR ANALYST!
AKANE
TOUKO
AND PLEASE WELCOME OUR SPECIAL GUEST, KUROMINE ASAHI-KUN!!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?!
IT'S A PLEAS-URE.
WELL, WE'RE GOING TO TAKE A PEEP INTO SHIRAGAMI YOUKO-SAN'S DAILY LIFE.
YOUKO-SAN'S DAILY LIFE?!
THAT'S WRONG, HOW CAN YOU..
WHAT, YOU DON'T WANT TO SEE IT?

NO, WELL, OF COURSE I...
WOULD NEVER DO THAT, EVER!
NO NEED TO WORRY SO MUCH, KUROMINE-KUN.
NO, TH-TH-THAT'S A BIT, I MEAN...
I feel young again
YOU WANNA SEE IT, RIGHT? SHIRAGAMI YOUKO CHANGING AND TAKING A BATH...
COME NOW, DON'T BE ASHAMED, KUROMINE.
PLEASE STAND BY
WHAT DO YOU THINK SHIROU IS, EXACTLY?!
WE'LL CUT TO A FANSERVICE PIC OF SHIROU INSTEAD!!
IF SOMETHING RISKY IS ABOUT TO BE SHOWN...

BURN THESE SCENES INTO YOUR EYES!! THIS IS...
NO, REALLY, THAT'S JUST WRONG...!!
!!
Kyaaa!
COME ON! WHILE YOU WERE STANDING THERE BLABBERING IT ALREADY STARTED!
THE SECRET DAILY LIFE OF YOUR CRUSH...
one cool beauty pose a day
パ
one cool beauty pose a day
HMPF. IT MIGHT BE A LITTLE TOO STOIC, EVEN FOR ME...
...NAH.

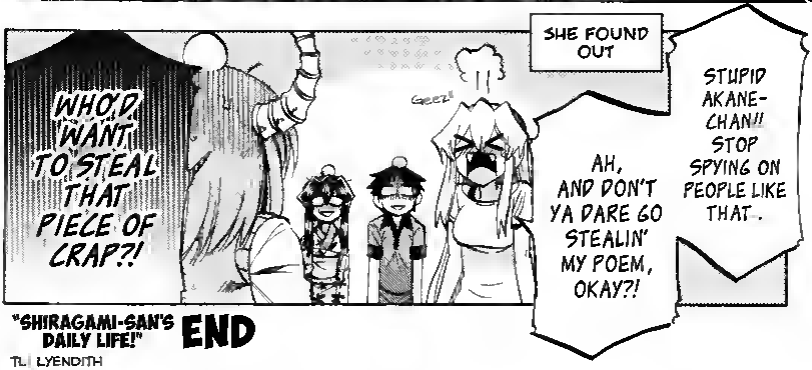
PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT FER THE PERFECT COOL BEAUTY!!
I'M NOT DONE YET!!
PLEASE STAND BY

THE PLAN WAS TO SPY ON SHIRAGAMI YOUKO'S SECRET LIFE AND ENJOY KUROMINE'S REACTION... RIGHT?!
TH-THAT'S NOT POSSI-BLE!!
I THINK WE MADE A MISTAKE WITH THE BASIC PREMISE OF THE PLAN.
...AKANE-CHAN.
WHAT?!

IF... IF SO, THEN I'M OUT, SORRY!!
ACTU-ALLY, I'M OUT ANYWAY!!
WA-WAIT, KUROMINE!! THE IMAGE IS BACK!!
EVEN THAT BONEHEAD SHOULD SHOW US A LITTLE...
!!
A DIARY?! HEY, KUROMINE, IT'S HER DIARY!!
DIARY
!!
SURELY SHE WRITES HER INNER-MOST FEELINGS IN THERE!
YO-YOUKO-SAN'S DIARY?!
N-NO, I HAVE NO RIGHT TO LOOK AT THAT!
B-BUT I REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT SHE WRITES IN HER DIARY...

MY HEART IS AFLUTTER, MY FEELINGS AGLITTER, A COOL BEAUTY LIKE NO OTHER.
SHOWTIME STARTS TODAY, YES, I'M A COOL BEAUTY EVERY DAY.
PLEASE STAND BY
SHUT UP! I DIDN'T WANT TO HEAR THAT CRAPPY POEM EITHER...
Oh the horror
ARE YOU SO SAD THAT YOU FEEL THE NEED TO MAKE ME HEAR MY DAUGHTER'S CRAPPY POEM?!
...AKANE-CHAN.
WHAT?! YOU LISTENED TO IT WITHOUT PERMISSION! AND NOW YOU SAY IT'S CRAP?!!

I...
I KNOW THAT, AL-READY...
BIP
COME ON, CUT THIS OUT! WHO KNOWS WHAT WE MIGHT SEE NEXT!
But of course, I mean!
SO WHAT?! ARE YOU GONNA SAY IT'S SOME CLASSY LITERA-TURE?!
AH... THIS TAKES ME BACH I HAVEN'T WORN IT SINCE THEN
MAYBE I'LL SLIP INTO IT, JUST FOR FUN...
!!
THAT'S IT, YOUKO!! THAT'S WHAT WE WERE WAITING FOR!!
HUH?! WHAT?!
EXACTLY!! NOW WE CAN GET AN EYE-FUL OF KURO-MINE'S PANICKED...
NO, I WON'T LOOK, OKAY?!
YO-YOUKO-SAN'S GONNA CHANGE?!
NO NO NO, THAT'S WRONG!! I JUST CAN'T!!
UKO


WHO'D WANT TO STEAL THAT PIECE OF CRAP?!
GEEZ!
SHE FOUND OUT
AH, AND DON'T YA DARE GO STEALIN' MY POEM, OKAY?!
STUPID AKANE-CHAN!! STOP SPYING ON PEOPLE LIKE THAT.

"SHIRAGAMI-SAN'S DAILY LIFE!" END

TL: LYENDITH
PR: RAUKCARAN
RAW/TS: TARAGE
CL: DJIDANEZOKAWA
RD: ARTHURIL

PRETTYANONYMOUS

INTERVIEW MADE FOR THE JITSU WA FANBOOK THAT CAME OUT IN SEPTEMBER 2015.

LEARN MORE ABOUT THE CREATION OF "JITSU WA WATASHI WA"!! MASUDA EIJI-SENSEI'S SPECIAL Q&A

TELL US HOW YOU CAME TO IMAGINE THIS STORY.

MASUDA: WHAT I WANTED TO DO WAS A STORY WHERE "ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE". ONE WHERE A HORNED GIRL COULD NONCHALANTLY WALK BY WITHOUT RAISING QUESTIONS. THEN I REMEMBER THINKING ABOUT THE THEME OF "SECRETS".

HOW WAS THE MAIN CHARACTER ASAHI BORN IN YOUR MIND?

MASUDA: AS THE MAIN THEME WAS "SECRETS", I THOUGHT ABOUT A CHARACTER WHO CAN'T HIDE ANYTHING, WHOSE EMOTIONS ALWAYS APPEAR ON HIS FACE. DESIGN-WISE, I MADE HIS FRONT HAIR SHORT SO THAT HIS EMOTIONS WOULD BE EVEN MORE VISIBLE.

TELL US HOW YOU CAME TO CREATE THESE HEROINES WITH A STRONG INDIVIDUALITY, AS WELL AS THE ORIGIN OF THEIR NAMES IF THERE IS ANY.

≺SHIRAGAMI YOUKO≻

MASUDA: IT'S THE HEROINE WHO "IS ACTUALLY OF A DIFFERENT SPECIES". MY FIRST WORRY WAS HOW I WOULD MAKE HER LOOK LIKE A NATURAL AIRHEAD, WITHOUT IT SEEMING CALCULATED. FOR THAT PURPOSE, I CREATED FACES THAT A GIRL IS DEFINITELY NOT SUPPOSED TO MAKE, THE "RUSSIAN FACES", AND RATHER THAN AN AIRHEAD SHE ENDED UP AS A COMPLETE IDIOT (LAUGH).

AS FOR THE NAMES, I ALWAYS DECIDE THE MOST SUITABLE NAME BASED ON THE DESIGN. SO THE FAMILY NAMES USUALLY CONTAIN A COLOR, AND THE GIVEN NAMES SOMETHING CLOSE TO THEIR IMAGE. HOWEVER, SINCE SHIRAGAMI-SAN AND ASAHI ARE THE PROTAGONISTS, THEIR NAMES INVOKE WHITE AND GREEN, AND BLACK AND YELLOW, RESPECTIVELY. ≻TLN: THE "YOU" OF YOUKO MEANS "LEAF", ASAHI MEANS "MORNING SUN". "SHIRA" AND "KURO" ARE, OF COURSE, WHITE AND BLACK.≺

≻AIZAWA NAGISA≺

MASUDA: INITIALLY, SHE WAS JUST SUPPOSED TO BE A ROBOT. BUT AS I WAS WONDERING IF I SHOULD ADD A ROCKET PUNCH, I THOUGHT "CAN I REALLY GO FAR WITH THAT?" SO I ADDED THE MINI-CLASS REP, AND SHE BECAME THE HEROINE WHO "IS ACTUALLY SMALLER THAN SHE LOOKS". I ALWAYS PONDER WHAT THE "JITSU WA" PART WILL BE UNTIL RIGHT BEFORE THE STORYBOARD STAGE.

≻AKEMI MIKAN≺

MASUDA: THEME-WISE, SHE WAS BORN BECAUSE I NEEDED SOMEONE WHO EXPOSED SECRETS. SINCE ASAHI WAS SO DESPERATE TO PROTECT SHIRAGAMI-SAN'S SECRET, MIKAN INITIALLY ENDED UP WITH A RATHER UNPLEASANT PART TO PLAY. SINCE I LIKE CHARACTERS IN A LONELY POSITION LIKE "A FEMALE FRIEND MORE SCARY THAN THE GUYS" OR "THE CHILDHOOD FRIEND WHO HAS NO CHANCE OF BEING CHOSEN", IT MADE ME HAPPY THAT SHE WAS THE EMBODIMENT OF THAT.